

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1, 3, 9-12, and 16-19, without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend claims 2, 4-8, 13, 15, and 20-22, and add new claim 23, as follows:

Claim 1 (canceled).

2. (currently amended) A connecting element, as set forth in claim [[1]] 22, wherein said second member (3; 13; 33) is arranged essentially perpendicular to said first member (2; 12; 32).

Claim 3 (canceled).

4. (currently amended) A connecting element as set forth in claim [[3]] 23, wherein said a connector (33) comprises [[a]] said at least one base plate (32), and said base plate has said at least one said elongated opening (34, 35) with said tooth-like notches (37.1, 37.2) located along the length of said at least one elongated opening (34, 35) for engagement with complementary notches of one said fastening element.

5. (currently amended) A connecting element, as set forth in claim [[3]] 4, wherein an outer contour of said connector (33) is formed complementary to an inner contour of the support so that said support can slide over said connector (33).

6. (currently amended) A connecting element, as set forth in claim [[3]] 4, wherein an inner contour of the connector (33) is shaped complementary to an outer contour of a support so that the support can be inserted into said connector (33).

7. (currently amended) A connecting element, as set forth in claim [[3]] 4, wherein said connector (33) has a rectangular configuration ~~and the~~ with openings (41.1 to 41.4; 51.2, 51.4; 52.1, 52.3) [[are]] arranged parallel to a plane for the passage of a fastening element, with said plane formed through said first member (32) of the connecting element.

8. (currently amended) A connecting element, as set forth in claim 7, wherein a plurality of additional openings (41.1 to 41.4; 51.2, 51.4; 52.1; 52.3) are ~~arranged~~ spaced vertically relative to each other in a plurality of planes parallel to each other.

Claims 9-12 (canceled).

13. (currently amended) A connecting element, as set forth in claim [[1]] 22, wherein a surface zone surrounding at least one said elongated opening has said notches (6, 7).

Claim 14 (canceled).

15. (currently amended) A connecting element, as set forth in claim [[1]] 22, wherein the outer contour of said at least one first or second member (2, 3) is complementary to the outer contour of at least one of the supports capable of being connected with said connecting element (1; 11; 31).

Claims 16-19 (canceled).

20. (currently amended) A connecting element, as set forth in claim 4,  
wherein said at least one base plate (32) is arranged in the same plane as said first member.

21. (currently amended) A connecting element, as set forth in claim [[10]] 22,  
wherein the pitch of said ~~teeth~~ tooth-like notches is 2.5 mm.

22. (currently amended) A connecting element for an assembly system

comprising a plurality of system supports having openings arranged in a defined spacing on at least one of a plurality of outer walls of the ~~support, wherein~~ system supports, said connecting element (1; 11; 31; 65) ~~comprises a~~ comprising an elongated first member (2; 12; 32) and at least one elongated second member (3; 13; 33) with spaced elongated sides and with at least one of said first and second members 2; 12; 32; 3; 13; 33) having at least one elongated opening (4; 5; 14; 15; 34; 35; 66) with elongated parallel sides spaced between and inwardly of said elongated sides thereof and extending in the elongated direction thereof and with at least a plurality of notches formed by a continuous toothing and extending transversely of the length of said elongated opening, said notches being arranged for securing said connecting element (1; 11; 31; 65) to one of said system support or to a base surface by a fastening element (61) passed through [[the]] said at least one said elongated opening (4, 5; 14, 15; 34, 35; 66) and engageable with complementary tooth-like notches (69.1; 69.2) of the fastening element (61), said connecting element (11; 35; 65) has at least one ~~bead~~ (16; 17; 36) formed therein and including ~~said at least one elongated opening with said bead having bead walls~~ (18.1, 18.2; 19.1, 19.2) extending in the direction of ~~said elongated opening~~ (14; 15) and ~~said notches comprise teeth arranged in~~ said bead walls (18.1, 18.2; 19.1, 19.2) corrugation formed therein extending outwardly from a surface of at least one of said first member or second member containing said elongated opening (14; 15), said corrugation having a first wall generally parallel to and spaced outwardly from the surface containing the elongated opening, and first and second side walls extending from said first wall to a surface from which said corrugation extends, said first side wall facing said opening and having tooth-like notches therein complementary to tooth-like notches in one of said supports to which said connecting element is to be secured.

23. (new) An assembly system comprising at least one base plate and vertical supports extending upwardly from said base plate, and connecting elements for connection to said base plate or to one of said vertical supports, said connecting elements each comprising an elongated first member having elongated sides and at least one elongated second member having elongated sides with at least one of said first member and second member having at least one elongated opening with elongated parallel sides thereon and spaced inwardly from said elongated sides thereof, at least a plurality of tooth-like notches extending continuously in side-by-side relation transversely of the lengths of said elongated opening, said tooth-like notches arranged for securing to said base plate or vertical supports by a fastening element passed through the at least one side elongated opening and engageable with complementary tooth-like notches of said base plate or supports.